

TIBBS Career Blitz - January 2012

Career Profile of Business Development Expert: Brandy Salmon, PhD

What is your current title and how long have you worked in your current job?

Innovation Advisor/Business Growth Manager
Center for Technology Applications
Center for Agricultural and Environmental Biotechnology

I have been with RTI since August 2011. Prior to RTI, I was with Duke for five years, with the Fuqua School of Business and Office of Licensing and Ventures.

Where did you get your PhD and what discipline was it in?

Cornell – Microbiology and Immunology

Did you do a postdoc?

Yes, HHMI Post doctoral fellow at Washington University School of Medicine

What are your main daily responsibilities?

For RTI, within the Center for Technology Applications, I provide technology scouting, licensing, market opportunity, market, and competitor assessments, and innovation advising services to commercial, government, and university clients. I also provide commercialization and business development support to the newly formed Center for Agricultural and Environmental Biotechnology Center with RTI.

What are the keys to success in your career field?

The key *skills* are derived from the blend of a strong scientific education/foundation with a business orientation, experience, and training. The keys to success in my career field, however, are much the same as those required for success in many business-related professions: strong work ethic, resilience, positive attitude, and an appreciation for being a team player and collaborative in spirit.

What were the most important factors in choosing your career path?

I was interested in the commercialization of science and this has been the guiding principal that has led me to work in a variety of business capacities within the corporate sector, academia, and now, a research institute.

What 1 or 2 pieces of advice do you have for people who want to land a job like yours?

Moving from the bench to business is not always easy, but there are interesting professional opportunities for folks who have both scientific training and business experience. Exploring unconventional opportunities to broaden out one's skill set, particularly early on, can be very helpful in making a transition/blending the two. Otherwise, my advice is to continually pursue ways to broaden one's skills (they're all important!) but also be patient along the way.